

REMARKS

The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for participating in the telephone interview with the Applicants' attorney on March 9, 2005. During the interview, certain clarifying amendments to the claims were discussed. It is believed that the present Amendment addresses the issues raised during the interview, so as to place the application in condition for allowance. Such allowance is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 2 are amended above. No new matter is added by the claim amendments. Entry is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for reasons stated in the Office Action. Claim 2 is amended above in a manner that is believed to address and overcome this rejection. In particular, claim 2, as amended, states a "second length (X2)," the meaning of which can be ascertained with reference to the present specification as filed at least at FIG. 4 and at page 5, lines 25-28. Entry of the amendment and removal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ejiri (U.S. Patent No. 6,770,974) in view of Applicant Admitted Prior Art (AAPA). In view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks, it is believed that the claims are allowable over the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-10 is respectfully requested.

In the present invention as claimed in amended independent claim 1, an "upper surface of the second line unit" is "of uniform height above the substrate over the entire length of the second line unit between the insulating plug and the inclined outer end." This feature is illustrated at least at FIGs. 4 and 5A-5C of the present specification. In this example, an upper surface of the second line unit 120b is of "uniform height above the substrate" 100 over the

“entire length of” the second line unit 120b between the insulating plug 127 and the point of intersection with the inclined outer end (see FIG. 4 of the present specification).

It is submitted that Ejiri fails to teach or suggest “an upper surface of the second line unit being of uniform height above the substrate over the entire length of the second line unit between the insulating plug and the inclined outer end,” as claimed in amended independent claim 1. Instead, Ejiri discloses a dummy electrode 18c that lies over a polysilicon dummy layer 34 (see Ejiri, FIGs. 13 and 16 and column 22, lines 44-48). The polysilicon dummy layer 34 is formed for making a level difference in the area where the dummy electrode 18c is formed (see Ejiri, FIG. 13 and column 21, lines 37-42). It therefore follows that, in Ejiri, the dummy electrode 18c is not of “uniform height” above the substrate 10 over the “entire length of” the dummy electrode 18c.

With regard to AAPA, it is submitted that AAPA likewise fails to teach or suggest this feature since AAPA does not teach or suggest such a “second line unit,” as claimed in amended independent claim 1.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Ejiri and AAPA, taken alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest the invention set forth in independent claim 1. In particular, neither reference, taken alone or in combination, teaches “an upper surface of the second line unit being of uniform height above the substrate over the entire length of the second line unit between the insulating plug and the inclined outer end,” as claimed in amended independent claim 1.

Since the combination of Ejiri and AAPA fails to teach or suggest the invention set forth in the amended claims, the claims are believed to be allowable over the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and removal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on the combination of Ejiri and AAPA, and allowance of amended independent claim 1, are therefore respectfully requested. With regard to dependent claims 2-10, it follows that these claims should inherit the allowability of independent claim 1 from which they depend.

Closing Remarks

It is submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested. If prosecution of the application can be expedited by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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